



**MONTANA
AMERICAN
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SENATE State Admin

Exhibit No. 9

Date 3-23-2011

Bill No. HB 279

March 23rd, 2011

The Honorable Jim Shockley, Chair, and Members of the Senate State Administration Committee:

Sen. Ron Arthun
Sen. Joe Balyeat
Sen. Anders Blewett
Sen. Larry Jent

Sen. Llew Jones
Sen. Carmine Mowbray
Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy

Dear Chairman Shockley:

The Montana American Indian Caucus expresses its support for HB 279, which would allow tribal governments in Montana, in the event of a tribal disaster or emergency, the authorization to request assistance from the Governor of Montana regarding access to disaster and emergency services.

Presently, local governments within the state of Montana are permitted to request the Governor's assistance with regards to disasters and emergencies. Tribal governments, however, are not currently included in the list of eligible entities to receive authorization to make requests.

The passage of HB 279 would provide equitable opportunity for tribal governments in regards to accessing this assistance, as local governments are already eligible for this funding.

In order to help provide critical resources and services for tribal communities during disasters and emergencies, the Montana American Indian Caucus strongly urges support, and to pass, HB 279.

With Sincere Support, we are

Sharon Stewart-Peregoy
Tony Belcourt
Frank Smith
Carolyn Pease-Lopez
Lila Evans
Shannon Augare
Jim Shockley